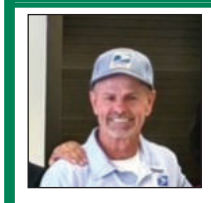
GREENBELT
News Review
An Independent Newspaper

Inside Stories



Mail carrier retires, p.11

Greenbelt Pride Festival, p.16

VOL. 89, No. 34 | 15 Crescent Rd., Suite 100, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1887 | JULY 16, 2026

A Promise Fulfilled: Springhill Lake Elementary Groundbreaking

by Charlotte Ormond

"This is not just a day that represents a new building, but it represents a new start, a new beginning and a new chapter in our school," Springhill Lake Elementary School (SHLES) Principal Trena Wilson said on July 9, during the long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony for the school's replacement building.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE ORMOND

At the groundbreaking ceremony on July 9, are, from left: PGCPS Chief Operating Officer Dr. Charoscar Coleman, Dicardo Dacosta, SHLES Principal Trena Wilson, Genesis Ramos, County Executive Aisha Braveboy, County Councilmember Tim Adams, PGCPS Chief of Staff Dr. Deann Collins, PGCPS Director of the Office of Alternative Infrastructure, Planning and Development Shawn Matlock and Mayor Emmett Jordan.

The groundbreaking marked the beginning of the demolition of the nearly 60-year-old building and the $82 million construction of the new school building. Students and faculty faced many obstacles in the old building, including overcrowding and aging infrastructure. According to data collected from last year's enrollment, the building was essentially one-third over capacity, with 803 students in a space designed for 605 students.

Features of the new building include an increased capacity of 850 students, 43 core classrooms, a controlled entry vestibule, indoor air quality and four "academic neighborhoods" with smaller learning spaces on either side of the building's central gathering space.

According to Maryland State Senator Alonzo Washington, who was in attendance on Thursday, officials have been advocating for this change for almost 14 years.

"During one of my first meetings with the Greenbelt City Council many years ago, I repeatedly asked this question: 'Why are we not asking PGCPS for a new Springhill Lake Elementary School?'" Washington recalled. "I remember there was fierce opposition, even within our own community."

See **SPRINGHILL LAKE**, page 7

City Still Awaiting Return of Firefighters Expected February

by Charlotte Ormond

As rumors circulate about the possible return of Greenbelt's career firefighters this summer, city officials continue to push for Prince George's County to return their career firefighters, particularly following the reassignment of the Northern EMS Duty Officer (NEMSDO), who had been positioned at Greenbelt since the end of December 2024, and the proposed cuts in staffing for a medic unit from nearby College Park.

Career firefighters were first removed from Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights, Bowie-Belair and Bunker Hill on June 30, 2024 (see the July 4, 2024 News Review). The removal was anticipated to be a temporary setback; two years later, the city still remains in a legal battle with the county.

City Manager Josué Salmerón said that he has been advocating for Greenbelt amidst the negotiations. Salmerón said former Deputy Fire Chief James McClelland, before retiring, had expected career firefighters to return

See **FIREFIGHTERS**, page 12

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE ORMOND

Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department on Crescent Road

GHI, Co-op Consider Future

by Cathie Meetre

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE ORMOND

The Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy in July 2026

The possible acquisition by Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI), most likely via its subsidiary Greenbelt Development Corporation (GDC), of the physical building at 121 Centerway that houses the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy (the Co-op) has given rise to considerable speculation and much anxiety among GHI members. In the two articles and the surrounding boxes on page 9, we examine the positions of the players.

The Co-op has been open about the advantages it sees and its viewpoint is relatively simple: the Co-op would rather have a building owner that is local and has a stake in the Co-op's successful continuing existence.

GHI, on the other hand, has been mostly silent about its thinking, likely because their potential solutions are both complicated and long term. Communications to members have been more about voting methods than financial strategy and outcomes.

The discussion of the Co-op's position in the page 9 article Co-op Store Strives for Local Ownership of 121 Centerway is based on direct communication with the Co-op Board. The page 9 article Social Media Runs Rampant as GHI Mulls Building Buy lays out the options before GHI, which are speculative and based on recent GHI financial reports, interviews with GHI-aware individuals and what the GHI Board would logically be considering to make its decision. The article also provides facts to clarify and correct social media rumors.

Council Receives Update on Nearly Complete Cemeteries Master Plan

by Deanna Dawson

The Greenbelt City Council's June 10 worksession covered two main topics: the draft cemeteries master plan and the budget process. This article reports on the cemeteries plan.

Carolyn Gimbal, senior architectural historian with Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc. (JMT), presented the latest version of the Historic Greenbelt Cemeteries Master Plan. The plan outlines a strategy for the preservation, maintenance and use of three historic family cemeteries: Hamilton, located at the end of Hamilton Place; Turner, located within the Greenbelt Cemetery on Ivy Lane; and Walker, located behind an office building at the end of Walker Drive. While there likely are other family cemeteries within the boundaries of what is now Greenbelt, these three cemeteries were specifically included in the Greenbelt Historic District National Historic Landmark (NHL) — nps.gov/places/greenbelt-historic-district.htm — because Greenbelt's founders identified them as points of interest for the new town and its residents due to both their historical significance and recreational potential. Being a part of the NHL makes the cemeteries eligible for a broader range of grant funding than they otherwise would be.

Plan Development

JMT began work on the plan

See **CEMETERIES**, page 10

What Goes On

Monday, July 20
No City Council Meeting, Summer Recess
Wednesday, July 22
No City Council Meeting, Summer Recess

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at greenbeltmd.gov for more information.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINE DORAN

Turner Cemetery, off Ivy Lane, seen in February 2025

Letters to the Editor

John Henry Jones

Few people have lived in Greenbelt during my lifetime who have had such a wide and positive impact on its residents as John Henry Jones. He was everybody's neighbor. His booming voice was always full of humor and encouragement. He brightened every room, every store, every street scene at which he appeared. He truly was "sunshine on a cloudy day." I did not know him as well as many, but it was easy to discern that he was a person who represented a true vision of goodness to reawaken our faith in humanity. I was honored that he called me a friend.

Rick Ransom

Rescue Cats

As a volunteer with Greenbelt Trap Neuter Release (TNR), I would like to respond to the July 2 letter to the editor entitled City's Double Standard for Rescue Cats by Becky Duncan.

Sadly, a lot of cats are abandoned. As a result, many cats roaming the streets are not feral (wild), but friendly and adoptable. The Greenbelt shelter is usually full, so when residents call them about taking in cats, they are frequently told that they can't help them. The alternatives offered are being transported to the county shelter, where their future is uncertain, or being TNR'd (trapped, neutered and released back outside).

The Greenbelt Shelter does not do TNR themselves. Our small group of volunteers has stepped up to provide TNR services to try to prevent more kittens from being born. Although we are not primarily a rescue/foster organization, we have found ourselves in a position of trying to do that too when we encounter adoptable cats or kittens. However, this is difficult because we receive no support from the shelter for fostering cats or getting them adopted.

Be aware that not all outdoor cats are adoptable. Feral kittens that are over 12 weeks old are rarely socializable and TNR is sadly the only path for them.

Our little group is doing its best to help as many cats as we can. If you need help with outdoor cats, would like to donate, volunteer, foster or adopt, email us at Greenbelt.TNR@gmail.com.

Nancy McNamara

"Pay As You Throw" Is Illogical

It never works. These people somehow delude themselves into thinking it might ... but it might work for us. The city of

See **LETTERS**, page 4

Story & Photograph Submissions

We welcome your stories and photographs about all things Greenbelt. While publication is not guaranteed, your submissions help us cover more of what goes on. Stories will be copyedited. Remember to include captions and identify people in photographs. See the information box on this page for publication deadlines and how to submit materials.

On Screen at Greenbelt Cinema

The Odyssey

From director Christopher Nolan comes the story of Odysseus, king of Ithaca, who embarks on a perilous journey to return home after the Trojan War. Starring Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, Robert Pattinson and Lupita Nyong'o.

Peter Asher: Everywhere Man

Peter Asher's extraordinary life has intersected with some of the greatest artists and musical moments of the last six decades. A child actor who became a pop star and then a manager and producer to the likes of James Taylor and Linda Ronstadt, he is a Zelig-like figure who remains a vital creative force to this day. Featuring interviews with Paul McCartney, Carole King and many more.

Maddie's Secret

The film is comedian, writer and actor John Early's critically acclaimed directorial debut starring himself as Maddie, a plucky dishwasher who leaps to viral superstardom at a trendy food content creation company. While her life seems picturesque — complete with an adoring husband (Eric Rahill), ride-or-die best friend (Kate Berlant) and a cupboard full of woman-owned ethically sourced chili crisp to boot — mounting professional pressures threaten to reawaken a hidden secret from her troubled past. A pitch-perfect blend of satire, melodrama, daring tonal shifts and intimate performances, the film marks a bold new voice in contemporary cinema.

Daruma

When day-drinking, unemployed paraplegic Patrick finds out he is the father of a 4-year-old girl he never knew existed, he enlists the help of his double amputee veteran neighbor Robert to drive him and his newfound daughter across the country to live with her maternal grandparents.

Coco

Despite his family's generations-old ban on music, young Miguel dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol Ernesto de la Cruz. Desperate to prove his talent, Miguel finds himself in the stunning and colorful Land of the Dead. After meeting a charming trickster named Héctor, the two new friends embark on an extraordinary journey to unlock the real story behind Miguel's family history.

Drop Us a Line!

Electronically, that is.

editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com

greenbelt CINEMA

Greenbelt Cinema
129 Centerway
301-329-2034
www.greenbeltcinema.org

Members always $7.00!
Member kids are always FREE!

After 5 PM: adults $10, kids $7, senior/student/military $9

Before 5 PM: general admission $8, kids $6

OC = Open Captions
CC = Closed Captions
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

SHOWTIMES:
JULY 17th - 23rd

The Odyssey (R)
(CC) (DVS) (2026) (172 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Fri. 4:00 PM, 7:45 PM
Sat. 10:30 AM
Sun. 2:00 PM (OC)
Mon. 1:00 PM, 5:00 PM
Tue. 3:15 PM
Wed. 7:00 PM
Thurs. 7:00 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Sun. 6:00 PM

Peter Asher: Everywhere Man
(NR) (2026) (118 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Wed. 4:00 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 4:30 PM
Sat. 11:00 AM
Mon. 1:30 PM
Tues. 4:00 PM
Thurs. 7:30 PM

Maddie's Secret
(NR) (CC) (2026) (98 mins)
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 7:15 PM
Sun. 2:30 PM
Mon. 4:30 PM
Wed. 7:15 PM

Trivia Night Fundraiser
Annual Event - Trivia, Silent Auction, Prizes!
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Sat. Doors open at 4:00 PM

Storytime on Screen - FREE!
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 10:30 AM - 11:15 AM

Daruma
(NR) (CC) (2024) (104 mins)
In honor of Disability Pride Month
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Tues. 7:00 PM

Coco (PG)
(CC) (DVS) (2017) (105 mins)
School's Out! - FREE!
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Thurs. 1:00 PM

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published).

Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary.

All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.

Greenbelt News Review

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES:
- Monday 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, Display ads (not camera ready).
- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).
- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.
- Tuesday 5 p.m. Co-op dropbox: Classified ads with payment only.
- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.
- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.
- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: $55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.
OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Tuesday, 2 - 4 p.m.
GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the Municipal Building.

Community Events

At the Library

Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) announced on Monday that the Greenbelt Library was temporarily closed for building repairs starting on Tuesday, July 14; the branch is anticipated to reopen later this week. For more information on the closure check the alerts page on their website at pgcmls.info/alerts.

Greenbelt Library's regular hours are Mondays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, noon to 8 p.m.; Thursdays and Fridays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sundays, 1 to 5 p.m.

Storytime on Screen

Monday, July 20, 10:30 to 11:15 a.m., ages 1 to 5, at the Greenbelt Cinema. Greenbelt Cinema and the Library are offering a free program of stories, songs and a short film for children ages 1 to 5 and their caregivers. No unaccompanied children or adults. Register at pgcmls.info/event/16485770.

The following events are tentatively scheduled because of the Library's temporary closure.

Storytimes

Tuesday, July 21, 12:15 p.m., ages 2 to 3. Register at pgcmls.info/event/16645483.

Wednesday, July 22, 12:15 p.m., ages 3 to 5. Register at pgcmls.info/event/16486792.

Thursday, July 23, 10:15 a.m., ages newborn to 2, Register at pgcmls.info/event/16486826.

STEM Fun

Tuesday, July 21, 4:30 p.m., ages 5 to 12. Dive into the world of science, technology, engineering and math with fun, hands-on experiments and activities. Explore Ozobots (small robots) through interactive challenges that spark curiosity and creativity. Register at pgcmls.info/event/16523484.

Craft and Create

Thursday, July 23, 2 p.m., ages 13+. Anyone can be an artist. Whether it's a job, hobby or a passing exercise, sketching is a great gateway into art as a form of creative expression. Come with a sketchbook or use the library's materials. People of all ages and skill levels are welcome, no matter the doodle or scribble. Register at pgcmls.info/event/16815752.

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

Greenbelt's shared commitment to community-powered hunger relief continues through Greenbelt PORCH. Food collection times for July are as scheduled below. Food placed on porches by the time listed will be picked up after that time.

Saturday, July 18 – by 9 a.m. for 14 and 15 Courts Laurel Hill Road.

Sunday, July 19 – by 4 p.m. for P.A.L. (PORCH at large) members (including former Woodland Hill donors). Email Robert Goldberg-Strassler by noon on July 18 at spreadruak@gmail.com and he will come to your porch.

Sunday, July 19 – by 4 p.m. for Eastway and 33 Court Ridge Road; by 5 p.m. for Lakeside Drive.

Saturday, July 25 – by 10 a.m. from Mathew Street to Megan Court, including Brett Place.

No collection will be made in July for 14 and 16 Courts Ridge Road, 11S Ridge Road and 8 and 10 Courts Southway.

Make Sock Monkeys At Artful Afternoons

The Greenbelt Recreation Arts Program invites guests to a series of free Artful Afternoon workshops where participants can make their own unique sock monkey. All materials are provided, but guests are welcome to bring their own socks, buttons and other decorations. The activity will be offered on Sunday, August 2 from 1 to 2 p.m. and from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Community Center, and on Sunday, August 9 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center.

This activity is recommended for adults and for family members working collaboratively. Guests who have the ability to use scissors and to sew with an oversized, blunt craft needle will be doing most of the work. Projects may not all be completed during the workshop times listed above, but guests will be equipped to finish at home as needed.

Seating is limited and advance signup is recommended. Sign up at sugeni.us/eyWh. Walk-ins will be welcome as space and supplies permit. For more information about Greenbelt Arts programs, visit greenbeltmd.gov/arts. Programs are supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council.

Sneak Preview: Utopia Film Fest Early Picks

The Monday, July 20 Reel and Meal at the New Deal Café will feature four films coming to the Utopia Film Festival this fall. All are upbeat and upward looking.

Barbed Wire from Iran is a short animation about hostility and repression, freedom and joy.

Rose from France is a moving short narrative about an artistic and perceptive young girl struggling with autism.

The Seeds of Peace brings seeds from trees that survived the Hiroshima atomic bombing to replant in communities devastated by forest fires in the western U.S.

Ukulele Bliss from Canada is former Greenbelt artist and musician Sally Davies' story of organizing her neighbors in Nova Scotia into a 100-member ukulele club. Davies and filmmaker Hubert den Draak will be there for an after-film discussion. They will end the evening with a short spoof AI-created film, Little Marco.

The free program begins at 6:30 p.m., in person at the Café and also on Zoom. To register for the Zoom link go to tinyurl.com/ReelMeal2026.

Utopia Film Festival is a production of Greenbelt Access Television, now in its 22nd year.

Reel and Meal at the New Deal Café is a volunteer-run, free film and discussion series, happening on the third Monday of every month, now in its 15th year.

For more information, email frankrgervasi@gmail.com or go to facebook.com/reelandmealNDC.

More Community Events are located throughout the paper.

Reparations Comm. Virtual Talk July 23

The Greenbelt Reparations Commission was created as the result of a City Council vote after a voter referendum indicated popular support. The group has been meeting monthly since 2023. Since that time, the commission has conducted interviews, tabled at community events, held town halls, worked with researchers and others to identify harms to Greenbelt's Native Americans and African Americans and to propose possible remedies. On Thursday, July 23 at 7 p.m., hear about the work of the commission and next steps from Chair Lois Rosado and Commissioner Denise Nadasen.

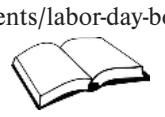
This is a free, virtual event. Register in advance via Eventbrite at tinyurl.com/9xcbtrcm.

An email with a Zoom link will be sent prior to the date of talk. The event is sponsored by Friends of the Greenbelt Museum, the Greenbelt Reparations Commission and the City of Greenbelt. To learn more about the Commission, visit greenbeltreparations.info.

Used Books Sought For PTA's Book Sale

It's that time of year again. Declutter your space and support a local elementary school. For those whose bookshelves are overflowing, the Greenbelt Elementary School PTA will be collecting used books to sell at the annual Labor Day Festival used book sale.

The PTA will accept book and media donations in Old Greenbelt on Saturdays, August 15 and 29 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., specific location to be announced in August. All books will be accepted (except manuals, encyclopedias and dictionaries), as well as CDs, DVDs, records, puzzles and games. For more information, email booksalegespta@gmail.com or visit sites.google.com/view/gespta/events/labor-day-book-sale.



Summer Fun Runs At Buddy Attick

Once again the Prince George's Running Club (PGRC) is partnering with the Greenbelt Recreation Department to host the Buddy Attick Summer Fun Run series. The series is part of Get Active Greenbelt and provides an excellent opportunity for all levels of runners and walkers to exercise in a friendly and welcoming environment throughout the summer months. Best of all, it's free.

Races will take place every Thursday at 7 p.m. (registration 6:15 to 6:45 p.m.) from now to August 13.

The course will take runners and walkers around the scenic and shaded Buddy Attick Park lake path for their choice of either 1.75 miles (1 lap) or 3 miles (2 laps). Meet at the Youth Center parking lot (99 Centerway, behind the library).

There are two steps needed to register:

1. Register on RunSignup at runsignup.com/Race/MD/Greenbelt/SummerSeries2016.

2. Download and print the City of Greenbelt activity registration form and bring it to your first race: greenbeltmd.gov/home/showdocument?id=17704.

Cancellation Policy

Races will be cancelled if there is lightning in the area after 6:30 p.m. Cancellations will be announced on PGRC's website.

Volunteers are needed to put on free races. Volunteer positions include registration, course marshal, water stop, popsicle and ice supplier, setup and cleanup. Sign up to volunteer at runsignup.com/Race/Volunteer/MD/Greenbelt/SummerSeries2016.

Golden Age Club

The Golden Age Club meets on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in Room 201 of the Community Center.

The following is the schedule for the remainder of July:

July 22, Bingo.

July 29, Sing along with guitarists Barbara and Mike.

Friends of Patuxent Environmental Fair

On Saturday, July 25 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Friends of Patuxent will host their inaugural Local Community Environmental Fair at the Patuxent Research Refuge. Free for the whole family, the fair is packed with activities, taxidermy dioramas, learning opportunities and entertainment. Here is a sneak peek at what they have planned:

Connect with local experts: Meet representatives from over 20 local environmental and conservation organizations to learn how to make a difference in the community.

Special Film Presentation: Enjoy a screening of Doug Tallamy's film, The Extraordinary Caterpillar.

Art & Discussion: The fair is being held in conjunction with a fantastic photographic gallery exhibit, featuring a special talk by Keith Kozloff about his work, inspired by the legacy of Rachel Carson.

Live Music & More: Enjoy live acoustic music while exploring the fair and connecting with neighbors.

Learn more about local wildlife conservation, discover native gardening tips, go for a hike or just enjoy a summer day with the family at Cash Lake and Patuxent Research Refuge grounds. There is something here for everyone. The Visitor Center is located at 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop.

This Week at the New Deal Café

Celebrating 30 Years in Greenbelt! Try Our New Menu & Drinks!

BECOME A MEMBER!*

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

113 Centerway, Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, MD

Monday, 9am-9pm; Tuesday—Thursday, 9am - 10pm; Friday/Saturday, 9am – 12midnight; Sunday, 9am – 9pm

REMEMBER TO TIP OUR PERFORMERS - IT'S THE ONLY WAY THEY'RE PAID!

*** RESERVATIONS: 301-474-5642 ***

TH 7/16	FRI 7/17	SAT 7/18	SUN 7/19
The Classic Jam w/ The Low Rent Quartet 7 - 9pm Jam that leans towards the blues, but other styles are welcomed	Danger Bird 8 - 11pm The Mid-Atlantic's premier Neil Young tribute band	POETRY OPEN MIC, 11a - 1p Connor Flicko & Kingpin 8 - 11pm Featuring guitarist Jake Banaszak of Lower Case Blues	Grateful Sunday w/ Weeds & Grass 6 - 8pm Celebrating the music of the Grateful Dead and more!

MON 7/20	TUES 7/21	WED 7/22	TH 7/23	New Deal Cafe
REEL AND MEAL 6:30- 9pm A monthly film series exploring social justice issues	S.A.W. Open Mic w/ Joey Campfire 6 - 9:30pm Sign ups begin at 6pm; Open Mic starts at 6:30p	Potecasi Slade & The Slade Band 7 - 9pm Funky blues band with deep DC roots	Still Cookin' 7 - 9pm Hot Blues, Cool Rock and a little bit of soul	RENEW OR BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NDC! See link below*

**Join NDC!* Go to NewDeal Cafe(dot) com, click on "ABOUT", then "BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW."*

FUNDING FOR THESE ADS PROVIDED BY A GENEROUS DONOR.

Letters cont'd from p.2

Middletown, Conn., has officially given up on its pay-as-you-throw trash program. The failure of Middletown's program should be instructive for the future of Greenbelt's. Middletown hired WasteZero, the same contractor that Greenbelt hired, with similar promises of 40 percent reduction in trash volumes. However, after achieving only an 8 percent reduction (a magnitude only slightly smaller than Greenbelt's 12 percent reduction), Middletown faced large price increases to cover the actual tipping fees that the city was paying. Now, if anyone had logically thought through the idea that a private contractor would take 20 percent of a city's trash fees and somehow save everyone money, the impending failure of WasteZero's scheme would have been obvious. However, there is a shocking amount of what Cory Doctorow calls "brain worms" when policymakers consider these privatization tactics. Indeed, there are still many defenders of Greenbelt's program, from councilmembers to city employees to residents online. I empathize with a desire to reduce waste, but like many environmental initiatives of the last decade, the current pay-as-you-throw program appears to be an effort to "do something" regardless of the underlying logic or actual impact. Greenbelt is filled with smart problem-solvers, and I am confident we can achieve a greater reduction in trash without giving a contractor who supplies subpar trash bags 20 percent of our fees.

Alexander Zajac

On 121 Centerway Purchase

On July 9, Cathie Meetre gave a synopsis of the issues facing GHI's membership regarding buying the building that houses the Co-op grocery store, pharmacy and Greenbelt Arts Center. Unfortunately, this article leads the reader to believe that the financial, zoning, legal and corporate questions are being addressed in a timely fashion. They are not.

GHI's Bylaws (2025) require that fully detailed disclosures be provided to the membership 30 days in advance of a vote at a special meeting. The meeting and the vote should be delayed until the details have been shared in writing with every member of GHI, including a professional evaluation of the risks and likelihood of this venture being profitable. Everyone needs time to read and understand this business venture. That's what cooperative, participatory democracy requires.

Leah Cohen

An Investment in Greenbelt

Speaking for the Board of Directors of the Greenbelt Arts Center, we are excited about the possibility of GHI, or its business subsidiary GDC, purchasing the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy building.

GAC has been part of our community for more than 45 years, and we've called the Co-op's basement home for over 30 years. It's where we've built and continue to operate Greenbelt's only live community theater.

The Co-op has always been much more than a grocery store. It's where we run into neighbors, catch up with friends and feel connected to our community. It reflects the cooperative spirit that has made Greenbelt special for generations.

Having GHI/GDC as the building owner would mean having a landlord that understands the value of cooperatives, nonprofits and community organizations. We would be excited to partner with an owner whose priorities are aligned with strengthening our entire Greenbelt community and supporting the organizations that call this building home.

This isn't just about buying a piece of real estate. It's about keeping an important community asset in the hands of an organization that understands what makes Greenbelt unique. We believe GHI/GDC ownership will strengthen not only the Co-op, but also the many nonprofits, businesses and residents who depend on this building every day.

We hope GHI members will support this opportunity. It's an investment in a building, but even more importantly, it's an investment in the people and organizations that make Greenbelt feel like home.

Carol Shaw, GAC President

Ill-gotten Funds

The Prince George's County Council had been systematically stealing funds from M-NCPPC over several years to fund their pet projects without oversight. This practice became so egregious that in April, Governor Moore put an end to it, passing legislation that recognizes M-NCPPC as a state agency, and saying the county does not have the jurisdiction to redirect funds.

The M-NCPPC is a national award-winning agency of the highest caliber, and has been recognized for more than 50 years for the highest excellence in fiscal and budgetary management. I'm sure Greenbelt was counting on the money Tim Adams and

See **LETTERS**, page 5

In Memoriam

Jeff Keir

Former Greenbelter Jeff Keir died on Friday, May 29, 2026 at the age of 74. He had lived in his home in Foxboro, Mass., for more than 30 years. He was born in Washington, D.C. He received an associate's degree from Nassau Community College, a bachelor's degree from Stony Brook University and a master's degree in labor relations from UMass Amherst.

Jeff's career began with the United States Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) at the Washington, D.C., headquarters. He represented government workers in labor disputes all over the U.S. This assignment prompted his move to Greenbelt. He later moved to Foxboro and worked out of the Boston office of the FLRA.

While living in Greenbelt, Jeff coached youth baseball and was also a commissioner for the Boys Club (now Boys and Girls Club). He was an active Big Brother in the then Big Brother Organization and a member of the Greenbelt Jaycees. That is how I and my late first husband Rick Barber met him. He became a very dear friend of mine, and later a good friend with my second husband Rick Ransom. He helped the Greenbelt Jaycees over the years, and my daughters remember knowing Jeff since they were small children.

After Jeff moved to Foxboro, Rick R and I stayed with him every time we were in the area to visit relatives in New Hampshire. We frequently ate lunch at Gillette Stadium, home of the New England Patriots, just three miles from Jeff's house.

Jeff was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease about six years ago but fought it bravely, attending classes and activities. He only recently discovered he also had cancer. We had planned to see him at the end of May but he sent me a text saying he needed to see me now. We took off and went to visit. I was glad we did because we got to hug each other at the hospital in Boston and reminisce a bit during our visits. Not a week later, he died during the night at a Hospice Center. I will remember him as a kind and thoughtful person who became one of my best friends.

---Barbara Ransom

Obituaries

The News Review publishes obituaries of Greenbelt residents, past or present.

You write it or we will if you prefer. We try to include information about participation in various activities and organizations, where the person lived and something about the family. A photograph and service information should be included. There is no charge.

Our Neighbors

We were saddened to learn of the death of Jeff Keir. He coached youth baseball and was a commissioner for the Boys Club, and also active in the then Big Brother Organization.

Greenbelters were saddened by the July 4 death of former Greenbelt mayor and city council member Gil Weidenfeld. He spent many well-respected years on city council, including 16 as mayor, a time which his family describes as one of his proudest accomplishments.

We also learned of the July 10 death of longtime Greenbelt physician Dr. David Granite. Many Greenbelters remember his care for them and their families. The family will host a shiva on July 18 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 6806 Tammy Court, Bethesda. A memorial service will be held at Mishkan Torah at a future date.

Congratulations to Todd Brill, a much-loved Greenbelt mail carrier on his retirement. He was honored at Green Ridge House on July 8, which was proclaimed Postal Worker Todd Appreciation Day. The News Review wishes Brill a very happy retirement.

Send details of your news to editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com.

Mishkan Torah Celebrates High Holidays Services

Mishkan Torah will celebrate the following holidays in September.

- Rosh Hashanah on September 11 through 13.
- Yom Kippur on September 20 and 21.

Mishkan Torah is located at 10 Ridge Road and can be reached at mishkantorah.org.

A Common Endeavor
Realizing the Promise of America
Scan with cellphone camera to play on YouTube
Greenbelt Bahá'í Community
www.greenbeltbahais.org

Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church
40 Ridge Road, Greenbelt
Open hearts, Open Minds, Open doors
Find us on facebook.com/mowattumc
301-474-5410
Pastor Evelyn Romero
Worship Service, Sundays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Core Values from Romans chapter 8.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF GREENBELT
Mass Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
Community Center Room 114
15 Crescent Rd
cathcomgreenbelt.org
ALL ARE WELCOME!
A Roman Catholic Intentional Eucharistic Community
OR - Join us on ZOOM! For ZOOM link: CCG1985+owner@groups.io

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
We Are an Open and Affirming Church
GREENBELT COMMUNITY CHURCH
One Hillside Road
Join Us Sunday
10:15 AM for Worship
www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org
Rev. Aubra Love, Senior Pastor

St. John's Episcopal Church
11040 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20704
301-937-4292 www.saintjohnsbeltsville.org
Welcomes you each Sunday for Worship & Sunday School at 10:00 AM

ST. HUGH OF GRENOBLE CATHOLIC CHURCH
• Daily Mass: Mon-Fri 7:15am*, Sat 9am*
• Sunday Mass:
◦ Sat vigil 5pm*
◦ Sun 8am, 9:30am,11am
• Confessions Saturday 3pm – 4pm.
Masks for the unvaccinated encouraged.
*Live streamed on Facebook and available on our YouTube page later.
CELEBRATE WITH US
135 Crescent Rd.
www.sthughofgrenoble.org

Mishkan Torah Congregation
10 Ridge Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Rabbi Saul Oresky, Cantor Yael Fischman
A welcoming, inclusive, and friendly synagogue offers something for everyone: young, old, single, married, and both Jewish and interfaith families.
Services at 8:00pm Friday and 9:45am Saturday in person and on Zoom
For more information, visit MishkanTorah.org or call 301-474-4223
A Dual-Affiliated Reconstructionist and Conservative congregation
10 Ridge Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770

Letters cont'd from p.4

county council promised us, and I'm sure our city management would put it to good use (July 9 News Review,). But do we want to be the beneficiary of stolen money?

The story allowed a one-sided framing from the county council's perspective: M-NCPPC is denying the council funds, while conveniently skipping over the fact that those funds were ill-gotten.

I also wonder, since the order from Annapolis was brewing for months, if the county council saw which way the wind was blowing and began overpromising to Greenbelt and other municipalities (the article mentioned the $1.165M grant included new line items and increases from past budgets), to stoke community outrage when council had to pull back the money it could no longer steal. Council would then point its collective finger at M-NCPPC for blame.

I mourn the loss of this source of funding to improve our city. Perhaps some of these projects can be covered by a grant directly from M-NCPPC, if within the purview of improving parks and recreation services. That way, at least it would be paid for legitimately and not via the council's scheme to buy community support.

James Adams

PHOTO BY JOSH LAYNE

Beaver at dinner

City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

GREENBELT CITY CALENDAR

Be sure to check out the City calendar for all up to date events at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

MEETINGS FOR JULY 20 - JULY 24

Monday, July 20, **NO MEETING - COUNCIL SUMMER RECESS**

Tuesday, July 21 at 7 pm, **REPARATIONS COMMISSION - *Virtual,*** *On the Agenda: Follow up from the Jun 27 Town Hall, Preparation for the Native American Town Hall, and an Update on the draft report*

Wednesday, July 22, **NO MEETING - COUNCIL SUMMER RECESS**

Thursday, July 23, **FOREST PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD - *Public Works Building,*** *On the Agenda: TBD*

In advance, the hearing impaired are advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov. This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

OFFICIAL NOTICE - PUBLIC HEARING

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND
CHARTER AMENDMENT RESOLUTION NO. 2134
LANHAM BOYS CLUB

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, a municipal corporation, has initiated legislative action to annex into the corporate limits of the City of Greenbelt lands contiguous and adjoining to the city's existing corporate boundaries, as described below:

A Charter Amendment Resolution of the City Council of Greenbelt Enlarging the Corporate Boundaries of the City of Greenbelt By Annexing Into The Corporate Limits of the City of Greenbelt Lands Contiguous and Adjoining to the City's Existing Corporate Boundaries Property Commonly Known As Lanham Boys Club, Consisting Of Approximately 10 +/- Acres of Land In Total Located Generally at the Lanham Boys Club.

The annexation resolution was initiated by the City Council pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated, Local Government Article, § 4-403.

The exact legal description and annexation plan for the above Annexation Area are available online at www.greenbeltmd.gov/news, or may be reviewed in person at the City of Greenbelt Department of Planning and Community Development, 15 Crescent Road, Suite 200, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed annexation on September 14, 2026, at 7:30 p.m., in the Council Room at the Greenbelt Municipal Building, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770. Public testimony will be received by the City Council at the hearing.

Written comments may be presented at the public hearing or submitted in advance to the City Clerk, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770.

ELECTRONICS, STYROFOAM, & PAINT RECYCLING

Saturday, July 25 from 9 am to 12 pm
Public Works Facility, 555 Crescent

Electronics Recycling - Accepted: CPUs, monitors, keyboards, mice, printers, laptops, recording equipment, speakers, scanners, surge protectors, cameras, telephones, radios, DVD players, VCRs, fax machines, wires, power cords. NO - ALKALINE BATTERIES or CFLs; NO - TUBE TVs.

Expanded Polystyrene - White, block Styrofoam #6. NEW: egg cartons and food trays!

PAINT RECYCLING! —$5 per container. DO NOT mix paint in other containers. If you are unable to attend the event, you may hire this service directly to come to your home for an additional $100 service fee. Contact: Yuck Old Paint, LLC 888-509-9825 (YUCK) or www.YuckOldPaint.com. Contact Public Works at (301) 474-8004 with any questions or concerns.

Contact Public Works at (301) 474-8004.

A majority (or quorum) of Greenbelt City Council members may attend community organization meetings, but no official Council action will be taken at these meetings. Please note that meeting locations may change after being published. For information on how to join these meetings, contact the respective organization directly.

* VOLUNTEER * VACANCIES * APPLY FOR A COMMITTEE OR BOARD TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the Advisory Committee on Education, Advisory Committee on Trees, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Appeals, Community Relations Advisory Board, Ethics Commission, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, Advisory Committee Advancing Public Safety, or Youth Advisory Committee and make a difference in Greenbelt!

Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today!

Call (301) 474-8000.

UPCOMING NATURE EVENTS

Walk with a Ranger: Reptiles and Amphibians
Saturday, July 18 from 10 - 11 am
Buddy Attick Park, 555 Crescent Rd

Enjoy a guided stroll around Greenbelt Lake along with the Greenbelt Park Rangers. This week's walk will be focused on exploring the native reptile and amphibian inhabitants of Buddy Attick Park. Meet at the main entrance under "The Big Tree". No registration required. The walk lasts approximately 1 hour.

Kayaking at Buddy Attick Park
Saturday, July 25 from 8 - 11:30 am
Buddy Attick Park, 555 Crescent Rd

Join Greenbelt Park Rangers and explore Greenbelt Lake by Kayak. Kayaks, vests, and paddles are provided at no cost, but supplies are limited. Participants are welcome to bring their own watercraft, vests, and paddles.

GREENBELT CARES PROGRAMS

STRONGER MEMORY CLASSES
Tuesdays, July 7 through August 11, 1 - 2:30 pm
Greenbelt Community Center, Ground Floor East

Participants will learn practical strategies to strengthen memory, stay mentally active, and connect with others in the community.

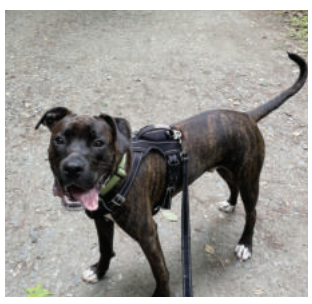
FREE - Registration is required. Final call for registration is June 15. To register, contact Cesar Herrera at 202-891-8071.

BACK TO SCHOOL HEALTH FAIR
Tuesday, August 18, 10 am - 1 pm
Springhill Lake Recreation Center, 6101 Cherrywood Lane

Meet organizations devoted to strengthening community connections - providing resources about health insurance, mental health services, and city educational programming. Free full health screenings (blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, A1C), vision + hearing screenings, dental screenings, fun activities and more!

FEATURED PETS

BLU



Ready for Adoption?

Call (301) 474-6124

11-month-old Blu was surrendered to the shelter back in March when his owner could no longer care for him. When he's not smothering you in affection, Blu loves to play with toys, go on walks, and learn new tricks. No puppy should have to grow up in the shelter – let's find Blu a home before his 1st birthday!

If you're interested in adopting bright-eyed Blu, please email animalservices@greenbeltmd.gov or call 301-474-6124 for more information.

ARTS HAPPENINGS

Visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/arts for more information and many other opportunities!

Sign up for ARTFANS, a weekly e-newsletter, at www.greenbeltmd.gov/list.aspx

Free Artist Talk with Cheri Glover Friday 7/17; 6-7pm. RSVP at sugeni.us/eEyT. Meet the artist currently featured in the Greenbelt Community Center Art Gallery. Cheri Glover's vivid and joyful artwork is inspired by "nature, dreams, and the beauty of being human." (Artists: bring your work and stay for an Art Share at 7pm!)

Fused Glass Jewelry Sunday 7/26; 11am-12:30pm & 12:30pm-1:30pm (Greenbelt Community Center) Fused glass is the art of melting colored glass into art pieces. Register for section one to make 2 pieces of fused glass art or for both sections to make 4 pieces. Registration required: see page 22 of the summer activity guide for details - www.greenbeltmd.gov/activityguide

MORE ARTS HAPPENING SOON

- **July Art Share** 7/17; 7-8pm Greenbelt Community Center

Registration required for these activities, see www.greenbeltmd.gov/activityguide for details

- **Senior Art Social: Sip & Paint** 7/23, 2-4pm (pg 32)
- **Make & Take Ceramics: Magical Miniatures** 8/9 - 8/16, 1-2:30pm (pg 23)

GREENBELT WELCOME KITS!

Material Drop-Off

We're looking for materials to add to the City's Welcome Kits for new residents and visitors. Please dropoff at the Municipal Building to

James Wisniewski
25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

NO LATER THAN 4 PM ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 21

Follow the City of Greenbelt on Facebook and Twitter @cityofgreenbelt! For City information and events, visit www.greenbeltmd.gov

New Deal Café Won't Renew Vendor Contract with Hilliard

by Anna Bedford-Dillow

On Saturday, July 11, the New Deal Café (NDC) Board of Directors announced they have decided to not extend the contract with vendor, Kenny Hilliard, past its current end date of July 23. At this time, it is unclear what will happen after that date. The board reported they sought input from "a number of members, volunteers, and supporters as well as those with expertise in nonprofit management and restaurant operations" in coming to their decision. The NDC has struggled financially in the past, as well as under Hilliard's management, the board acknowledged and noted it "has been challenged by an operating model based on partnership between a for-profit and [a] nonprofit organization." Their audit committee in an in-depth report previously concluded the same, stating the current business model "does not work," in a memo no longer available on the NDC website but reported in the News Review's February 19, 2026 issue.

PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLOW

Kenny Hilliard in a photo from 2024

The NDC was Hilliard's third restaurant location, in which he debuted in November 2024 (see the August 28, 2024 and October 30, 2024 issues). Hilliard had hoped to combine his restaurant experience with his passion for music at a venue that seemed to hold an ideal combination. However, financial travails plagued the partnership.

Past Financial Problems

The former vendor, the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket, also struggled to operate a financially successful café, and the Café had taken over the cost of the mortgage in their final months, as the Co-op Supermarket began to recoup some of over $200,000 in losses it had accrued in the first 18 months of the partnership. The NDC Board then surprised the Co-op Supermarket with the announcement of new vendor negotiations part-way through a contract term, which the NDC Board said was financially necessary (see the June 5, 2024 issue).

Prior to the Co-op Supermarket, Michael and Leah Moon, owners of DC Vegan, also failed to successfully operate as a vendor from the Café. Though the Moons also had to contend with the challenges of Covid during their tenure, in their final months they operated on limited hours and focused on their catering business.

Contentious Tenure

More than struggling to turn a profit, under Hilliard's management, the board reports there have been "significant financial missteps by the vendor and consistently declining revenue drained the Café's reserves and has put the Café in a precarious position" (for more on the board's statements of problems with Hilliard's management see the January 29 issue). However, supporters of Hilliard's cite complications with billing, unexpected expenses and a point-of-sale system that Hilliard believed incorporated the vendor's taxes. Hilliard himself objected to the Board's characterization that he mishandled finances in the contentious February 10 special membership meeting to discuss the financial situation (see the February 19 issue).

In February, we reported that the audit committee warned the 4 percent surcharge could not sustain the music program and consecutive operating losses and shrinking reserves limited the Café's options. At that time, we reported "the audit committee presented three policy options: negotiate a new cooperation agreement with Hilliard and potentially renew his contract; seek a new vendor, though the committee expressed skepticism about the feasibility of that path; or dissolve the cooperative, pay member debts, declare bankruptcy and seek a new operating entity to take over the space and music program. 'We believe that if the doors close at the end of the board's relationship with Mr. Hilliard, they will not reopen,' the memo state[d]" (see the February 19 issue).

In March, the NDC Audit Committee submitted a resignation en masse due to lack of communication and engagement from the NDC Board. "There has been no substantive discussion between the Audit Committee and board about the concerns raised in these memos. The board presumably is moving forward with future plans, and its unwillingness to engage with us makes our further involvement pointless," said the resignation memo, which was reviewed by the News Review. At least some of the members of the audit committee must have since reconsidered as two of the three are listed as current audit committee members today.

The NDC Board's announcement on Saturday of the end of the partnership with Hilliard stated: "The former and current board endeavored to collaborate with Kenny on overcoming these substantial [financial] challenges. Despite these efforts, they ultimately were not able to agree on a feasible and financially sustainable plan."

The NDC Board says it is "refining and executing the plan that will sustain the Cafe's mission as they design the next chapter." They invite people who would like to volunteer or contribute to reach out to them at newdealcafegreenbelt@gmail.com.

Kenny Hilliard did not respond to our request for comment by press time.

NDC Food and Beverage Management History

Kenny's Kale, November 2024 to July 2026

Co-op Supermarket, July 2021 to October 2024

Michael and Leah Moon (DBA DC Vegan), July 2018 to June 2021

Note: Due to the Covid pandemic, the Café ceased operations from March 17, 2020 to June 2021 due to a series of shutdown orders for restaurants and music venues by the state of Maryland and Prince George's County.

Self-management of food and beverages, November 2016 to June 2018

Karim Kmaiha and Maria Almeida, March 2008 to November 2016

Prior to March 2008 the Café had a volunteer-run kitchen.

Creative Kids Camp Show

PHOTO BY KEN LOO

Recreation Coordinator Brian Butler plays the Big Bad Boar in Creative Kids Camp's summer show, Hercules and Hippolyta, at the Community Center on July 10. There will be more performances of the camp show on Fridays, July 24 and August 7, at 10 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. Free tickets are available at the Community Center business office or by calling 301-397-2208, starting on the Tuesday of each show week.

PHOTO BY BONNIE SCHRACK

Orange sky on Friday, June 12

KIDS CLICK!
Friends of Patuxent Youth Summer Nature Photo Contest at Patuxent Research Refuge
FREE TO ENTER; CASH PRIZES!
CONTEST RUNS FROM: JUNE 13 - AUG. 15, 2026
To enter, bring a parent or guardian and 1-3 original 4"x6" photos (no frames or mats) to the Friends Wildlife Images shop desk at the National Wildlife Visitor Center. Cellphone photos also welcome! Learn to take great nature photos in a free program with the Bowie-Crofton Camera Club. See below for more!
Accepting contest entries Wed-Sat 10am-3:30pm (closed on federal holidays). Open to ages 5-14.
https://friendsofpatuxent.org/kidsclick ← Kids Click! Info Here
Interested in the Kids Click! photography competition? Join us for the...
Patuxent Research Refuge Visitor Center, Laurel
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Bowie-Crofton Camera Club: Nature Photography Talk + Walk!
All Ages Welcome Click here for website
Sat. July 18 11:00 AM

School News

GMS Principal Leaving

PHOTO COURTESY X/TWITTER

Marcellus Clement, Greenbelt Middle School's principal for the last five years, will not return for the new school year this fall. Clement announced his departure on Friday, July 10. A search to fill the principal position has already begun. Look for an article in next week's paper for more.

SPRINGHILL LAKE continued from p.1

Holding back tears, Greenbelt Councilmember Jenni Pompi described the groundbreaking as "a long time coming," reflecting on the years of advocacy that led to the project.

"This school will stand as a testament to what can happen when a community refuses to give up," she said.

School History

Wilson noted the similarities between the current construction and the school's history. In 1966, the school's opening was delayed, and students attended classes at Center School, now the Community Center, and kindergarten classes were held at a local church (see the August 25, 1966 issue). Now, for the next two years of construction, students will be temporarily relocated to a "swing space" in the former Dora Kennedy French Immersion School building. This location was chosen because of its proximity to the old building, allowing students who walk to school to continue doing so.

"History has a remarkable way of repeating itself," Wilson said.

Other speakers at the groundbreaking ceremony included U.S. Senator Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive Aisha Braveboy, Greenbelt Mayor Emmett Jordan, members of the Greenbelt City Council and two fifth graders who attend SHLES.

Students' Perspective

While officials shared their experiences working together on the project and what it will mean for the community, Genesis Ramos and Dicardo Dacosta, the two students, shared personal memories from their time at SHLES, providing the audience with a reminder of who this work was really for.

"This school has helped me become braver, believe in myself and keep trying when things are hard," Ramos said. "Part of me is sad to see the school go, but I know this just means new beginnings."

Dacosta said the new school would give students "a safe, clean and comfortable place to learn" and show them that "our education matters."

Despite the Challenges

Several officials emphasized the grit of the students and faculty who experienced the old building and noted that they did not allow the challenging conditions of the old facility to interfere with learning and teaching. Washington stated that students are improving in mathematics and English, noting that nearly half of English language learners are making progress toward English proficiency. He also acknowledged that the school employs 12 National Board Certified teachers, a point that drew applause from the audience.

"When we talk about the challenges facing this school, we should never confuse challenges with a lack of ability," Washington said.

Alsobrooks acknowledged the shortcomings of the aging facility, saying, "Our students were forced to attend schools in buildings that, in my opinion, did not always reflect their dignity."

Springhill Lake Elementary is one of 18 schools that will be delivered over a six-year period through Prince George's County's public-private partnership school construction program, according to Alsobrooks.

Many speakers closed their remarks by looking ahead to the project's completion, saying they hoped to return in two years for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Charlotte Ormond is a University of Maryland student at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism interning with the Greenbelt News Review.

Robotics Team Loses Practice Space; Coach Seeks Community Solution

by Karen Bogoski

Each spring for the past three years, Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS) has been in the news for sending teams to the VEX Robotics World Championship. This month, however, the school's robotics club lost the rent-free off-campus workshop where it had held most of its practices since 2021. Next month, students will be designing and building this school year's robots in one of the school's engineering classrooms. Because the club consists of 30 high school students building five robots, plus a middle-school feeder team, the engineering classroom will be cramped despite the school's best effort to make space for the club's tools, parts cabinets and practice field.

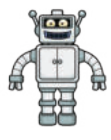
If a new off-campus workshop could be established for the Roosevelt robotics club, it would increase the chance that it could continue its record of excellence. A space larger than a classroom would also be necessary if the club is to implement a long-standing goal of helping other high schools in Prince George's County build competitive robotics teams.

The faculty sponsor of the ERHS robotics club, Karen Bogoski, isn't just looking for a stopgap. An engineering teacher at Roosevelt, she has reached out to teachers and administrators at other Prince George's County schools — including Du-Val, Parkdale and Northwestern High Schools and Mount Zion Preparatory Academy — to ask a broader question: could area schools share a dedicated robotics space instead of each one scrambling for a classroom, a hallway or a borrowed gym? Some of these schools currently run small or inactive robotics clubs; others, like Mount Zion, are interested in starting one but none have space for it.

Out of those conversations has come an early-stage effort called STEAM Fusion Works, exploring whether a shared robotics center — and eventually a broader Community STEAM makerspace — could be established somewhere in the Greenbelt area. The group has had preliminary conversations with at least one local property owner about available space at Beltway Plaza, though no lease or terms have been finalized.

"Our students have shown they can compete with the best teams in the state and country," said Bogoski. "What they need now is a stable place to build and practice. I'd rather solve that once, for every school in the area that needs it, than have each of us searching for space on our own every couple of years."

STEAM Fusion Works is still forming. It does not yet have nonprofit status, staff or a lease, but Bogoski says community interest now will shape what comes next, from finding the right space to building the volunteer and financial support needed to open it.



Residents interested in learning more, volunteering, donating equipment or professional expertise can email Bogoski directly at karen.bogoski@gmail.com.

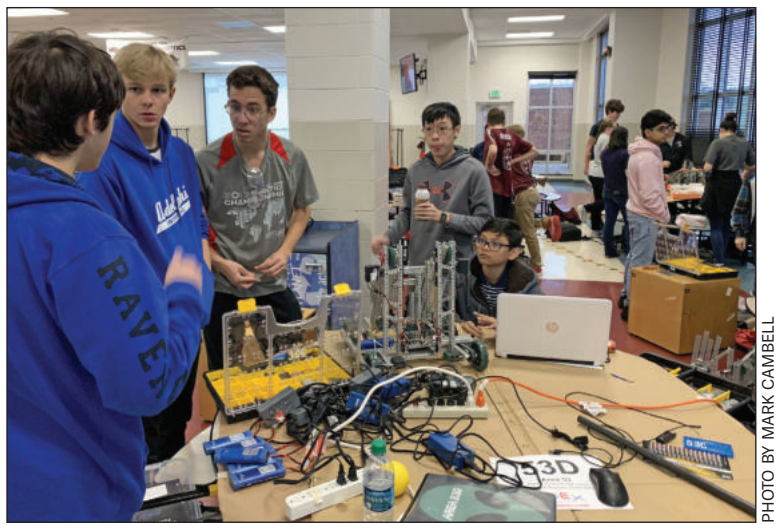


PHOTO BY MARK CAMBELL

In this photo from 2019, the ERHS Robotics Team works on their robot.

PHOTO BY OWEN KELLEY

In this photo from March, 2026, Driver Antony Lin (third from left) of ERHS consults with another team shortly before a match. To Lin's right are team members Violet Ridge and Meghana Noojipady. Not pictured are Loriel Nickel and John Kelley.

Karen Bogoski is an engineering teacher and faculty sponsor of the ERHS robotics club.

PUBLIC POLICY VOLUNTEERS

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
LEGACY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

The University of Maryland's Legacy Leadership Institute on Public Policy, in partnership with the State of Maryland, is looking for volunteers age 50+ to serve as volunteer legislative leaders during the 2026-2027 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly.

The twelve-week classroom training (two days per week) begins on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, and ends on Wednesday, December 2, 2026.

Classes will be held at the University of Maryland Extension, 8930 Stanford Blvd, Suite 25, Columbia, Md., 21045. The volunteer assignment will be in the legislative offices of members of the Maryland General Assembly in Annapolis.

Participants will serve a minimum of two (2) days per week starting Wednesday, January 13, 2027, and ending Monday, April 12, 2027.

For more information or for an application, contact Wesley Queen at wqueen@umd.edu.

Spellman Overpass Resistance Fridays

Join the weekly protest on Spellman Overpass, Fridays (except in rain or wind) from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30-ish. Flags and big-letter messages are provided to cheerfully encourage Parkway motorists' awareness. To minimize driver distraction, extra signage is discouraged.

Access from Gardenway or from the Eleanor Roosevelt High School crosswalk. Questions? Email kashla@pm.me.

Play Mahjongg Sat. Afternoons

Familiar with American mahjongg? Have a 2026 card? Come play on Saturday afternoons starting at 2:15 p.m. in Room 109 of the Community Center. While many games can be played in the Active Aging Game Room at that time, there usually is a table or two of mahjongg. Register in the Recreation Department office. The next two class sessions will be held during the fall and winter terms. Check the catalog for more information.

Cheri Glover's Art On Display

Visit the current exhibition at the Community Center Art Gallery, where Cheri Glover's vivid and joyful artwork is inspired by "nature, dreams and the beauty of being human." The Gallery is open daily: Monday through Friday evenings from 5 to 9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The show is on view through August 9.

Français, s'il Vous Plaît New Summer Location

For the months of July and August, the French conversation group that meets every Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. will meet in Room 109 (Senior Activity Room) at the Community Center.

All ages and all levels of proficiency are welcome.

Chess Club Meetings

The Greenbelt Chess Club will meet on Tuesdays, July 21 and 28 at the Youth Center from 6:30 to 8:50 p.m. The club welcomes people of all ages and skill levels. To be added to their mailing list, visit tinyurl.com/ycy2nz4m and complete the brief form. Email questions to greenbeltchessclub@gmail.com.

2026 GHI Special Meeting & Vote: July 23–24

Regarding Potential Acquisition of 121 Centerway

Members: Check your Email

The July 23 GHI special membership **meeting** will be in the Youth Center Gym. You must be on-site to participate. **Registration begins at 7:00pm, and the meeting starts at 7:30pm** once quorum is reached**.**

GHI has again contracted Simply Voting to host the **vote** on motion(s) to be finalized during the meeting. Simply Voting will send emails to GHI member addresses on file with a link to your ballot.

Check your inbox(es) and spam folders for a test email July 17–18 from vote@simplyvoting.com. If you plan to vote online, it is your responsibility to ensure GHI has your current email address as soon as possible. Update or confirm your email address by contacting GHI Member Services by Monday, July 20.

All members (with and without email) can vote in person Thursday immediately after the member meeting, or Friday 9am–8pm at the GHI Office.

Additional Information

Members were given this information about the proposal:

1. The presentation for the April 9 Town Hall provided in email April 8, and paper copies at the Town Hall.
2. The April 15 *News Review* article about the April 9 Town Hall.
3. The June 22 official announcement for the July 23 meeting. See your US postal mail, or links in the June 22 email from Member Services.
4. July 6 Voting Guide and FAQ responding to member questions, sent via US postal mail and email.
5. July 9 GHI Community Alert email with links to recent packets above.
6. A further packet sent Monday July 13 in email and US postal mail with expanded FAQs.

Path	Prerequisite	Where & When	Method
1. Online	Current email address must be on file with GHI	**Simply Voting website** After membership meeting Thursday July 23 until 8pm Friday July 24	Secure email link from Simply Voting on your smartphone, tablet, or computer
2. Membership Meeting	Not already voted	**Youth Center** Immediately after membership meeting	In-person supported online voting
3. In Person at GHI	Not already voted	**GHI Office** 9am–8pm Friday July 24	In-person supported paper or online voting

Choose your path to vote!

Registration for the July 23 special membership meeting opens at 7:00pm in the Youth Center Gym. **Members must be on site to participate in the meeting.** During the in-person meeting, the membership will discuss and finalize the motion(s). When that meeting goes into recess, members will vote online or in-person, for or against those motion(s), until 8:00pm Friday.

Purpose

The GHI Board of Directors is requesting a formal vote from the membership to grant explicit authorization regarding the potential acquisition of the commercial property located at 121 Centerway (the building housing the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy).

Proposed Motion

This proposal is subject to amendment and revision during the July 23 membership meeting.

RESOLVED, that the membership of Greenbelt Homes, Inc. hereby authorizes the Board of Directors to conduct a comprehensive structural, environmental, financial, and legal investigation of the commercial property located at 121 Centerway, Greenbelt, MD 20770 (the "Property"); and FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the Board determines the acquisition to be financially viable and in the best strategic interests of the Corporation and its members, the membership hereby authorizes and approves the purchase of the property for a purchase price ·not to exceed Three Million Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars ($3,800,000.00), such purchase to be made through Greenbelt Development Corporation (GDC) or another wholly-owned subsidiary of GHI, on such terms and conditions as the Board shall determine, subject to the strict satisfaction or waiver of the following mandatory protective contingencies:

1. **Financing Contingency:** Securing a commercial loan commitment from a qualified lender on terms, interest rates, and debt service coverages deemed acceptable and sustainable by the Board.
2. **Property Condition Contingency:** Obtaining satisfactory results from professional, independent structural, mechanical, environmental (Phase I/II), and engineering assessments of the building.
3. **Due Diligence and Title Review:** Completing a comprehensive title, zoning, and legal review to ensure the property is free of unmarketable liens, encumbrances, or adverse legal restrictions.
4. **Tenant Rights and Legal Frameworks:** Full legal review of existing commercial tenant leases, including the proper disposition of any Tenant Right of First Refusal (ROFR) or lease renewal covenants currently in effect.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon the satisfactory clearance of all listed contingencies, the Board of Directors is authorized to take all actions and execute all documents, instruments, and agreements necessary to consummate the acquisition, including but not limited to entering into a purchase agreement, arranging financing, guaranteeing or co-signing any loan related thereto, and engaging necessary legal, financial, and technical consultants.

GREENBELT HOMES INC. COMMUNITY

Social Media Runs Rampant As GHI Mulls Building Buy

by Cathie Meetre

GHI members are anxiously speculating about the cost and risk (though less about future benefit) of buying 121 Centerway, the building housing the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy. The GHI board and committees, comprised of those who have the same stake as any GHI member, are diligently studying the present, the near future and the long-term health for GHI – and the possibility, however small, of losing the grocery store to a landlord with no stake in Greenbelt.

Who is the Buyer?

The likely owner would be GHI's wholly-owned subsidiary, Greenbelt Development Corporation (GDC) or a similar newly set up organization. GDC was created around 1953 to own the Parkway Apartments and it provides a "corporate shield" from liability. Only very specific risks would result from a default, but GHI co-signing a loan with a commercial lender would result in GHI being directly responsible if GDC defaults.

Dividend and Loss

GDC makes a profit on Parkway Apartments. Last year's $22K loss was a "book" expense incurred when it transferred profit (accumulated over some years) of approximately $500K to its owner, GHI.

Once purchase loans are paid off, the Co-op property should provide income to GDC, as it does to its current owner ($18,000 a month from the Co-op, plus basement rents and minimal expense). Why, then, would the current owner, Glen Burnie Partnership (GBP), sell? Perhaps to cash out and buy something depreciable (see box on Depreciation).

The Goldilocks Zone

GHI seeks a financing strategy that avoids higher monthly fees for members and facilitates future surpluses. Stability or improvement of GHI's financial situation is likely the highest priority and locking down the Co-op probably secondary. Ultimately, the paid-for building should generate revenue partially offsetting monthly fees.

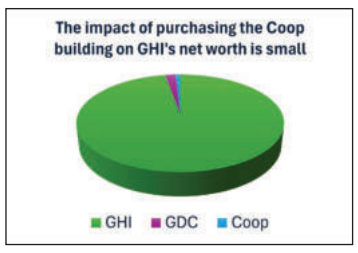
Financing

Commercial loan rates (currently about 5 to 8 percent) influence loan duration. Ideally, building rents would cover the payback (or better) each month. Another alternative is to cash in sufficient GHI investments and replace them as investments with a loan to GDC. As of 12/31/2025, GHI's investments were worth four times the $3.5M purchase price at $14M-plus.

Financing Strategy A

One conventional approach would be for GHI to lend the downpayment (maybe as much as 30 percent or $1,050,000) to GDC, which could get a commercial loan for the rest. GDC could repay both loans out of rent.

The GDC loan would then become part of GHI's investment portfolio. Three critical factors would be: 1) ensuring that GHI gets a comparable rate of return to its current investments, 2) that the amount being paid back is in line with the income generated to avoid losses that affect monthly GHI member fees and 3) to remain in compliance with the law.



GRAPHIC BY CATHIE MEETRE

121 Centerway ($3.5M) is under 1% of GHI's ~$400M (1,600 units at $250K).

Financing Strategy B

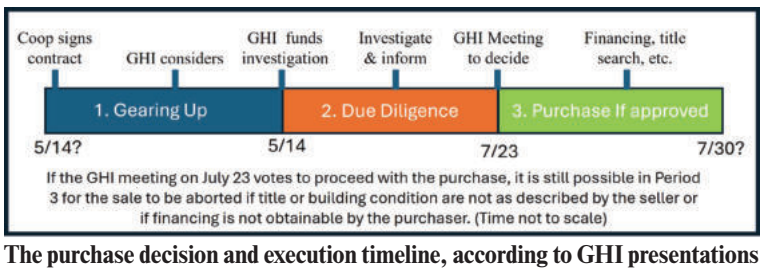
A creative alternative could be for GDC to initially borrow the full $3.5M from GHI at a rate of interest comparable to GHI's current portfolio. Only when/if the investments are needed to pay for a major GHI rehab does GDC take out a commercial loan.

The same critical factors are relevant, and other permutations or approaches may well also be under consideration.

Rumors and Falsehoods

The Unofficial GHI Facebook group has propagated rumors and falsehoods, often from misplaced trust in AI. Here are some truths:

- The individual GHI homes will not be security for a loan. Loans, including by GHI or any lender, would use the purchased 121 Centerway itself as security.
- GDC, not GHI, would purchase 121 Centerway. This purchase would not affect ownership of the grocery store operation, which would remain the property of the Greenbelt Cooperative Supermarket.
- The board is working on purchasing without causing increased monthly charges to members. Inflation and real estate tax increases, however, remain as the largest factors affecting increases in GHI member monthly fees.
- GHI's total investments would include the loan on 121 Centerway, with an interest rate similar overall to today's.
- GDC will only start to profit from 121 Centerway when the loan is paid off. But at that time, it would likely receive the future equivalent of perhaps $25,000 per month.
- GDC is a separately incorporated entity wholly owned by GHI. A default by GDC would not generally result in GHI being held responsible for all GDC's debts unless it had co-signed the loan.


Coop signs contract
GHI considers
GHI funds investigation
Investigate & inform
GHI Meeting to decide
Financing, title search, etc.
1. Gearing Up
2. Due Diligence
3. Purchase If approved
5/14?
5/14
7/23
7/30?
If the GHI meeting on July 23 votes to proceed with the purchase, it is still possible in Period 3 for the sale to be aborted if title or building condition are not as described by the seller or if financing is not obtainable by the purchaser. (Time not to scale)

GRAPHIC BY NEWS REVIEW

The purchase decision and execution timeline, according to GHI presentations

Co-op Store Strives for Local Ownership of 121 Centerway

by Cathie Meetre

In 2025, after decades of ritual asks and rejections, and to everyone's surprise, California-based Glen Burnie Partnership (GBP), the 121 Centerway store's owners since 1970, agreed to sell it to the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy (the Co-op) which entered into a $3.5M contract on February 18. The contract permits local purchase of the store building by themselves, the City of Greenbelt or Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI).

At the time of signing, the property was independently appraised at $3.8M so the agreed price was below the appraisal. GHI was kept informed throughout and was cognizant of the contract content.

The Time Is Now

Real estate contracts are written so that failure to complete the arranged transaction by the given date means the sale is off. The Co-op transaction is close to that situation, having only until July 30 to settle (with one extension already granted). Extensions to a buyer are apparently rare in commercial real estate.

Deadlines Looming

The Co-op's earnest money deposit of $20,000 will be forfeit on July 15, before the outcome of the vote of the GHI membership scheduled for July 23 is known. When GBP's lawyers were asked to comment on the probability that a second extension would be granted, Co-op Board Chair Kim Kash reports that they noted wryly that GBP would be "quite content not to sell."

The Real Risk?

Some GHI members have expressed concern about the risk to GHI's finances of purchasing the building. Kash feels strongly that the real risk to GHI and Greenbelt is of GHI not purchasing the building. She points out that the community could end up without a grocery store if the current or a future owner arbitrarily decides not to renew the lease or raises the rent to a prohibitive level. She believes the GHI purchase solution would provide steady rental income to GHI and stability to the store – and to the community it serves. She points out that the value of GHI is diminished if there's no grocery store in Roosevelt Center and the remaining businesses there would likely suffer without the traffic generated by the Co-op.

Enmired in the rehabilitation or demolition of the Armory, the city is likely out of options to purchase even if it wanted to.

Store Status

With GHI as the landlord, Kash states that the Co-op would have the confidence to invest the money needed to revamp the building. With the triple net lease in force as it is now (see box), any improvements made by GHI that are physically attached to the store, e.g., flooring, plumbing and electrical refurbishment, become the property of the current owner. Even if the triple net rent model continues with GHI, if the owner is GHI, the Co-op, according to Kash, would be confident in investing its resources because they can trust that GHI will not end their lease and take that investment for themselves.

While Kash hopes for an improved leasing arrangement and a more collaborative approach to the store, she firmly believes the Co-op would still be better off with a triple net lease with GHI than any other arrangement with a different owner.

Kash points out that the Co-op would be an excellent source of rental income for GHI. The current rent paid to GBP is $18,000 per month and the nature of the lease means that, in general, GBP has no offsetting expenses. With currently vacant space in the basement, however, GBP currently shoulders the $9K in annual real estate taxes that accrue.

Who Benefits?

Kash firmly believes that all Greenbelt benefits – and none more than the Co-op and GHI. Residents benefit from security for their grocery store, Co-op benefits from a local and participatory landlord, and GHI benefits from rents and from the confidence that its 1,600-home operation will continue to have a grocery store, maintaining property values and services to residents. She describes it as a multiple-way win-win.

Integrity of Purpose

Kash confirms that no member of either board will be financially rewarded in this transaction. The benefit to board members is exactly the same as that of every resident: a stable, well-run grocery store whose engaged and responsible building owner has a stake in a successful outcome. Board members of both organizations all have a vested interest in the success of the Co-op and GHI. She sees the relationship as symbiotic.

Triple Net Lease

The triple net lease now in force between the property owner and the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy has been the standard for many years. The tenant pays rent to the owner plus the triple of taxes, insurance and maintenance – plus utilities in this case. The tenant has all the risk. This arrangement contributes to the degradation of rental properties since the renter has little incentive to make improvements because at the end of their lease, any investment belongs to the owner.

The successful campaign for a new roof and a solar array in 2018 (Rays on the Roof) enabled the Co-op to install both – but the $350K for the new roof actually enriched the current owner by increasing the market value of the property. The solar array, which was not permanently attached to the roof, is the only part of that investment owned by the Co-op.

Purchase Process

On May 14, GHI obtained membership permission to assign $30K to evaluate the possibility of purchasing 121 Centerway, the building now housing the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy and the Greenbelt Arts Center. A second meeting on July 23 will discuss the results and vote to purchase or not. A no vote will stop the process permanently. A yes vote allows the board to make the final decision whether or not to purchase, including backing out if some impediment is found.

As noted in the accompanying article, the last date for signing the purchase agreement is July 30.

It is important to know that the proposed motion (p. 8) is merely a draft and may be (in fact is likely to be) changed during the meeting by the participants.

Inability to come to a decision will effectively nullify the purchase agreement.

Rentals and Leases

Commercial and residential leases differ significantly. Residential leases make the landlord responsible for taxes, insurance on the building and maintenance. Commercial leases of the type the Co-op has mean that all the above are expenses for the renter, not the landlord (see Triple Net Lease box).

Depreciation

This is a gradual subtraction of the value of an item over time. It's mostly for tax purposes. Buildings, cars, even websites can be depreciated meaning that each year a fraction of the value is subtracted and used as an expense to reduce earnings and therefore taxes – instead of taking the whole thing as an expense all at once. But real estate/buildings in fact usually appreciate. So while a landlord owns the building, depreciation reduces or eliminates taxes. When the building is sold for more than its depreciated (or even original) value, the profit is a capital gain, taxed at a much lower rate than income. Upside down as this seems, it is sometimes desirable financially for a landlord to make a loss or even keep the building empty.

History

The current Co-op building at 121 Centerway was erected in 1948, opening on November 9. The basement has hosted a bowling alley, a U.S. Post Office and a church. The approximately 20,000 square feet building currently contains the grocery store upstairs and the Greenbelt Arts Center and unleased space in the basement.

In 1984, the current Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy was formed after the dissolution of the large cooperative conglomerate that owned several grocery stores, what is now the Carroll Gas Station on Southway and the Scan furniture stores whose locations included one in Greenway Center.

From Public to Private

The entire commercial center was sold off in early 1954 by the federal government, forced to do so when its green town initiatives were deemed socialist during the anti-communist rhetoric of the McCarthy era. Developers were looking ahead, snapping up property.

Who Owns What?

Centerway has 12 separately listed properties (per public tax records), some of which host multiple businesses. The city owns four, including the Cinema. Some are owned by the businesses occupying them, for example, Greenbelt Granite Syndicate (Granite Building), Greenbelt Auto and Truck and the Greenbelt Barber and Stylist. Some lease out building elements they don't use themselves.

George Christacos and his family own four, including the New Deal Café.

CEMETERIES continued from page 1

in 2025, partially funded by a grant the City of Greenbelt obtained from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Gimbal presented the first draft at a community meeting on July 23, 2025 (see the August 14, 2025 issue) and at a council worksession in October 2025 (see the November 6, 2025 issue). Another community meeting was held on March 24, 2026 to present the second draft of the plan; input from community members and others was collected at the meeting and during a public comment period. Associated with the current draft is a comment response matrix, a table of 125 comments made by the public or by professional reviewers and Gimbal's response to each. Gimbal now considers the plan, included online in the worksession's agenda packet, to be 95 percent complete although she views it as a living document that can be amended in the future by city officials or staff.

Historical Context

The cemeteries are burial sites for members of the Hamilton, Turner and Walker families but likely also contain the remains of persons they enslaved. The plan includes considerable historical information on the families, including some basic family trees. Gimbal compiled genealogical data from Ancestry.com, census records and wills and tracked down a Turner family Bible held by First United Methodist Church of Hyattsville, in which matriarch Sarah Turner recorded family births, deaths and marriages, and logged births and deaths of enslaved persons from 1825-1850.

Recommendations

The plan recommends several steps the city should take to establish a sustainable strategy to restore and maintain these cemeteries: 1) establish a cemeteries maintenance team; 2) establish a seasonal routine maintenance schedule; 3) make critical site repairs and improvements; 4) repatriate the removed grave markers; 5) install new interpretive signage or monuments; and 6) establish heritage programming.

Site-specific Recommendations

Hamilton Cemetery, which is next to a community garden field, is overgrown with vines and shrubs, and these should be cleared. The cemetery boundaries are not visible on the ground, but Gimbal mapped a square patch that is covered by vinca, a plant that commonly was planted in cemeteries. She recommends that a chain-link fence be erected around that square, which almost certainly lies within the cemetery. "Does it have to be chain link?" councilmembers almost unanimously wondered. Gimbal explained that preservationists recommend modern materials for fencing historic cemeteries rather than wood or other materials that could be perceived to represent the period the site was in use. Gimbal offered to research fencing options that are more attractive than chain link but would serve to delineate the site.

Turner Cemetery is basically in good shape but the existing partial fence should be replaced with a fence that fully bounds the cemetery. The existing chain link fence at Walker Cemetery still is in good condition but eventually should be replaced. The highest priority for this site is improving the access trail, which should be done soon. Resident

PHOTOBY COURTESY CITY OF GREENBELT

Headstones from Hamilton Cemetery are in storage at Public Works. Shown are the headstones for Andrew Hamilton and his wife, Jane Hamilton.

J Davis noted that the local chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution, which maintains this cemetery because two Revolutionary War veterans are buried there, cancelled their annual Memorial Day cleanup because the trail condition made access difficult for some participants.

Headstone Repatriation

Some Hamilton Cemetery headstones have been stored by Public Works since their removal from an onsite display case that had deteriorated. Gimbal recommends that they be returned to the cemetery, placed in a newly designed display case rather than laid out in a way that implies presence of a grave. Locations of graves are not known at any of these cemeteries. Because the three cemeteries are in wooded areas, Gimbal believes that trees and tree roots would limit the usefulness of ground-penetrating radar for locating graves and does not recommend it.

Council Questions

Council complimented Gimbal's thorough and thoughtful work on the plan. Councilmember Danielle McKinney asked Greenbelt Museum Director Megan Searing Young, who oversees the JMT contract with Acting Director of Planning & Community Development Jaime Fearer, if the cemeteries are integrated with Museum programs. Searing Young responded that they are not currently on Museum walking tours but are included in the city's way-finding plan and information on the cemeteries can be added to wayside panels and will be featured in the Museum's new education center. In response to a question from Councilmember Frankie Fritz, she said the Reparations Commission has Gimbal's information on burials of enslaved persons and intends a memorialization project to recognize these burials.

Responsibility

Searing Young said thought must be given to where responsibility for the cemeteries should reside within city government – in Public Works or Planning & Community Development? And would they fall within the purview of an existing advisory board? She suggested that a Friends group be formed to monitor the cemeteries, which Davis endorsed. Davis also urged that a maintenance plan be made and implemented before other steps of the plan, which likely will be eligible for grant funding.

Find More Peace Through Meditation

Katrina Boverman and the Mishkan Torah Synagogue Sisterhood are offering Summer Guided Meditation classes via Zoom every other Monday through August 24. There is no charge; donations are welcome. For more information email or call Katrinaboverman@yahoo.com or 301-641-1035.

Summer Food with SUN Bucks Helps Combat Childhood Hunger

The 2026 Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer program, Maryland SUN Bucks, runs from June through August to ensure no child goes hungry when school doors close for the summer.

Last summer, Maryland set a historic precedent by distributing $75 million in direct benefits to feed more than 630,000 students, the largest investment in combating childhood hunger during the summer months in state history.

Acting Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Stacy L. Rodgers said, "SUN Bucks bridges the critical hunger gap that opens when schools close for the summer, a gap that has widened due to federal changes in the SNAP program. Maryland continues to step up to combat childhood poverty and ensure our customers can afford to feed their families."

DHS will partner again with mRelief, a nationally recognized civic tech organization, to help SUN Bucks families enroll in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. DHS will also partner with the Department of Juvenile Services and their Safe Summer Initiative and with the Maryland State Department of Education to ensure that every eligible child receives this valuable benefit.

For the vast majority of Maryland families, accessing SUN Bucks requires zero paperwork. The state automatically enrolls students who qualify through existing programs, delivering benefits directly to them.

Students whose families receive SNAP or Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) will see an additional $40 per student added directly to their existing EBT cards each month from June to August (totaling $120 per student). Students qualifying through Medicaid, the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals program or out-of-home care are also automatically enrolled.

Maryland SUN Bucks can be used to buy food wherever SNAP EBT is accepted: grocery stores, some farmers markets, including Greenbelt's, and some online retailers.

For families whose children are not automatically enrolled but may still qualify, a streamlined, user-friendly application is available online. For more information or to check eligibility and apply, visit dhs.maryland.gov/sunbucks.

Information in this article is drawn from a press release from Governor Wes Moore's office.

Taste Of
COLLEGE PARK
Summer '26
JULY 17TH -26TH
JOIN THE CITY OF COLLEGE PARK
CELEBRATING OUR LOCAL FOOD SCENE!
CITY OF COLLEGE PARK
KEEP YOUR RECIEPTS! THE FIRST 10 PEOPLE TO VISIT 5 PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS CAN CLAIM A PRIZE AT CITY HALL!

Green Ridge Residents Celebrate Retiring Mail Carrier Todd Brill

by Anna Bedford-Dillow

From left, Kimberly S. Potts, Green Ridge House (GRH) property manager/ HUD specialist; Patty Ramsburg, GRH community manager; Marvel Brown, GRH Association social director; Todd Brill, mail carrier; Diana Brill, Brill's wife; and Charlene Backstrom, GRH Association secretary, gather to celebrate Todd Brill's retirement.

Todd Brill, dedicated and beloved Greenbelt mail carrier, has retired. Residents of Green Ridge House, especially, reported that he will be greatly missed there. On Wednesday July 8, they threw him a retirement party. The event brought together friends, family and residents, all of whom were eager to recognize him, Charlene Backstrom, resident and secretary at Green Ridge House, told the News Review.

Brill had been delivering mail to Green Ridge House for eight years. On-Site Manager Kimberly Potts described him as "the epitome of professionalism."

Postal workers provide timely delivery of mail and packages but also provide connection between families, within communities, to businesses and institutions every day, noted the residents. At Green Ridge House they proclaimed July 8, 2026 as Postal Worker Todd Appreciation Day and presented Brill with a proclamation at the party. They also presented a certificate of appreciation for his service and dedication to their residents.

"His dedication, reliability and commitment to doing the job right have never gone unnoticed," said Potts, who praised the accuracy and timeliness of the mail deliveries under Brill's care, and noted packages were brought directly to residents' doors. "Todd knows many of our residents and staff by name, and he greets everyone with a warm smile and kind words," said Potts.

With thanks for professional service, friendliness and kindness, the residents congratulated him and hope he will enjoy more adventures and wonderful years making memories with his family.

"His friendly personality and exceptional work ethic have made a lasting impression on our community," said Potts. "He will be greatly missed by all of us. We wish him nothing but happiness in this next chapter of his life."

There was cake to accompany the retirement party that Green Ridge House residents and staff held for mail carrier Todd Brill.

- Photos by Cyndi Smith

Concert Band Celebrates Greenbelt Day with Community Performance

by Li'l Dan Celdran

On Sunday, June 7, the Greenbelt Concert Band performed as part of the City of Greenbelt's annual Greenbelt Day celebration at the Community Center. The event brought together musicians, families and community members for an afternoon of live music honoring Greenbelt's civic spirit and long-standing tradition of community arts.

Led by Music Director Joan Rackey, with guest conductors Jocelyn Faison and Elvira Freeman, the band presented a lively and varied program designed to engage audiences of all ages. The concert featured a mix of patriotic selections, film music, classical works and lighthearted popular arrangements, reflecting both the band's musical range and the celebratory nature of the event.

Highlights of the program included Eric Coates' The Dam Busters March, selections from Chicago and Up, Eric Whitacre's October, Sammy Nestico's Montego Bay and John Philip Sousa's iconic The Stars and Stripes Forever. The performance opened with the national anthem and included audience favorites such as music from The Incredibles and Barry Manilow on Tour, creating an energetic and festive atmosphere throughout the afternoon.

The Greenbelt Concert Band extends its sincere appreciation to the Music & Arts store for generously providing music folders for the musicians, as well as to the City of Greenbelt for its continued support of the arts. Special thanks are extended to members of the city council for their attendance and continued support of local arts programming and community engagement. And thanks to Greenbelt Access Television for filming the concert. The band also thanks the many volunteers and community members whose efforts help make performances like this possible.

With more than 80 years of service to the community, the Greenbelt Concert Band remains committed to its mission of inspiring, entertaining and engaging audiences through live music. The next season begins in September. Musicians are welcome to join. For more information, visit greenbeltconcertband.org.

Li'l Dan Celdran is the manager of the Greenbelt Concert Band.

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Be ON one.
$46 gets you on thousands.
www.GreenbeltNewsReview.com

2026 Greenbelt Outstanding Citizen Nomination Form

Submit your nomination by **August 1** to
Tom Jones
Outstanding Citizen Committee
1 Woodland Way Unit C, Greenbelt MD 20770
or **OutstandingCitizenGB@gmail.com**

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

Attach a statement describing why this nominee deserves recognition as Greenbelt's Outstanding Citizen.

You can include a list of organizations or activities in which the nominee has participated, including length of time, specific accomplishments, their impact upon Greenbelt or people within the City, and personal qualities that make the nominee special. Note this award is for *unpaid* volunteer work only.

Others' testimonials or supporting material, are useful but not required.

You may be contacted for additional information. If you prefer, send this form now and complete the statement later. The form and any additional information must be received no later than the **August 1 deadline**.

Nominated by:
Name(s) Signature(s) Telephone

_____

We need your input—thank you!

Montpelier Hosts Volunteer Open House

On Saturday, July 18, Montpelier Historic Site & Museum will host an open house for visitors to explore the various volunteer opportunities Montpelier has to offer, including tour guides, garden aides, and collections aides who support ongoing digitization and transcription efforts. There are also one-time opportunities for those interested in supporting Montpelier's special events.

These opportunities are eligible for student service-learning hours.

For more information, call 301-377-7817. Visit pgparks.com/volunteer to learn more about requirements to volunteer with the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County.

Nugent & Kash
OF COMPASS
Featured Greenbelt Listing
8D LAUREL HILL ROAD

1-Bed | 1-Bath | $155,000

Beautifully maintained and updated upper level unit in the charming historic Greenbelt housing cooperative. The front yard belongs to this unit, and includes the most charming, private deck ever, plus carefully designed and beautifully maintained perennial landscaping.

This outdoor space is another whole living area to augment the compact but comfortable one-bedroom flat upstairs, above the street and in the trees.

Kim Kash &
Andrew Nugent
kim.kash@compass.com
m: 301.789.6294
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Dr. Dianna Lee, Dr. Clayton McCarl, and Dr. Richard Duarte are licensed general dentists.

FIREFIGHTERS continued from page 1

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE ORMOND

Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department on Crescent Road

by February 2026 (see the November 13, 2025 issue). Since then, Salmerón said the language surrounding the return has become less decisive and the timeline less clear. There have been talks of the career firefighters returning this August, however he is not confident about the timeline and commitment.

"That's not reassuring to me, because 'looking at bringing back staffing' is no promise and not a strong indication that they would bring staffing back," he said, emphasizing that the county is "non-committal to a firm date."

In addition to the postponement of bringing staff back, according to Salmerón, the Northern EMS Duty Officer assigned to Greenbelt was reassigned to Station 10 in Laurel over a month ago. The NEMSDO serves as the department's on-duty commander, overseeing emergency responses, staffing and day-to-day EMS operations and had been stationed at Greenbelt after career firefighters were removed (see the December 11, 2024 and January 9, 2025 issues). In addition, on June 5, Fire Chief Thelmetria Michaelides announced a staffing reallocation that would impact Medic 812 operating out of College Park, which staffs an advanced life support ambulance. Under the proposal, that medic service would no longer have been available 24 hours a day every day of the week, instead becoming unavailable on weekdays after 3 p.m. and on weekends, under the proposal. College Park councilmembers raised serious concerns about the impact on safety in the area and on June 10, Streetcar Suburbs reported that the proposal to remove the paramedics had been put on hold.

Salmerón said he was concerned with the changes and proposal and noted how Greenbelt and neighboring towns have been hit the hardest throughout this process.

"Our area, meaning Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights, College Park and Beltsville, has endured the brunt of the reallocation of staff actions. We're going on two years now, and we are getting frustrated because we are not seeing other stations getting cut," he said. "The cuts have been isolated to this area."

According to Salmerón, the city could not provide recent response time data to the News Review because it has not received a report from the fire chief since November 19, 2025. The News Review requested the response data that had previously been reported regularly to the city since the career firefighters' removal but Michael Yourishin, press information officer for the county fire department said he was unable to provide the information, citing ongoing litigation. On July 2, the News Review submitted a public information act request for current response times in the Greenbelt area and the data for comparative time periods prior to the career firefighters' removal.

The cities of Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights and College Park remain involved in an active lawsuit over the firefighters' removal, though the case was postponed until September (see the January 22, 2026 issue). Since the case was filed, Berwyn Heights has had its firefighters returned. College Park firefighters joined the case because of the local impact on them, though they never lost their career firefighters. Salmerón acknowledged that one reason for the delay in returning all the career firefighters that were removed in 2024 is that the county fire department remains understaffed, awaiting more new trained recruits, so the solutions are limited. However, Salmerón said that Greenbelt officials are doing everything they can to return the career firefighters to the city.

"We are trying, we are, every chance we get to make a case with the county executive and fire chief," he said.

Charlotte Ormond is a University of Maryland student at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism interning with the Greenbelt News Review.

City Notes

Public Safety and Community attended the Springhill Lake Elementary School groundbreaking, met with police to review a death-in-custody and, with Public Works, visited the fire station prior to the return of firefighters.

Constituent Services participated in Greenbelt Interfaith Leadership Association (GILA) and Community Relations Advisory Board (CRAB) meetings and Economic Development met Greenbelt business owners. Information Technology installed a cost-saving wireless link to the Animal Shelter.

Code Enforcement inspected 19 commercial suites, 31 rentals and one complaint.

Animal Shelter residents are four cats, eight kittens and three dogs, after one cat and two dog adoptions.

Recycling/Sustainability participated in GHI's Sustainability Meeting. Ballfields/Parks, Streets and Horticulture wrangled event furnishings, prepared ballfields and removed the July 4th stage. Horticulture cleared storm-damaged trees and Streets prepared a burial site.

The Community Center coordinator facilitated a summer camp field trip as session two wound down. Therapeutic Recreation provided inclusion support for Parents Night Out.

Rangers and Event staff supported summer camp, Pride, kayaking and herpetology events.

Spirit of '76: Greenbelt At the Bicentennial

A new exhibit at the Greenbelt Museum, 10-B Crescent, looks back at the U.S.'s 200th birthday as the nation now celebrates the 250th. The free exhibit is open Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. through November 22. Learn about Native American protests and civil rights efforts by African Americans, women, LGBTQIA+ people and those with disabilities. Or just come by to see some groovy 1970s clothing. Polyester, anyone?

City Council News

PHOTO BY TRENT LEON-LIERMAN

On Monday, July 13, the Greenbelt City Council codified collective bargaining for all regular part-time, full-time, nonconfidential and nonmanagerial employees of the city. Pictured, Michael Canavan, a Public Works employee, speaks in favor of collective bargaining at the council meeting.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARTMAN

Jessica Mailander, Greenbelt's new economic development manager, is formally introduced at the July 13 City Council meeting.

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Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred July 6 - 12, 2026. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an inquiry. Call the non-emergency number 301-474-7200 or email pd@greenbeltmd.gov. Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Incident Summary

Greenbelt Police reported two mental health diversions, three domestic incidents and a case involving investigation of Internet Crimes Against Children. Two juvenile missing person cases were resolved; another girl reported missing is said to have bipolar disorder and a history of attempting self-harm.

On July 12 near 7595 Greenbelt Road, an off-duty police officer recovered his handgun, badge and credentials after they were left behind.

Burglary/Home Invasion

On July 7 at 1:57 p.m. near 6105 Breezewood Court, four to six young men entered an apartment through an unlocked sliding glass door and began taking items.

Shooting Investigation

On July 8 at 2:01 p.m. near 9322 Edmonston Road, four to five young men were seen arguing with individuals in a white Camry. Officers found no victims and no shell casings, but they did find a window of a vacant unit struck by a stray bullet.

Shots Fired

On July 12 at 3:13 p.m. near 5823 Cherrywood Lane, a woman heard six shots and some bullets came through her window; no injuries were reported. Another apartment unit was also struck but no one was home. Detectives are conducting an investigation.

Armed Person

On July 6 at 2:02 a.m. near 5801 Cherrywood Terrace, two men were arguing, and one pulled out a metal folding knife and attempted to cut the other. Officers arrested him, and he was transported to the Prince George's County Department of Corrections.

DUI Arrest

On July 10 at 22:32 p.m. near Greenbelt Road and 62nd Avenue, a driver was suspected to be under the influence, refused all tests and was arrested.

Fraud

On July 7 near 9 Pinecrest Court, a man was trying to contact Apple for customer support, but was defrauded of $10,000 over the course of two days.

On July 10 near 126 Westway, a man had student loan accounts opened in his name.

Theft and Shoplifting

On July 6 at 9:31 a.m. near 5910 Greenbelt Road, someone selected merchandise and fled without paying.

On July 7 at 11:20 a.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a boy caught shoplifting by loss prevention staff was banned from the location and his guardian was contacted; at 11:35 a.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, a man was apprehended for shoplifting, and was banned from the location.

On July 8 at 1:24 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a woman concealed merchandise inside a shopping bag and left without paying; at 4:21 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man was seen on camera concealing several items on his person; he was taken into custody and banned from the location.

On July 9 at 12:48 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man stole merchandise and fled; at 8:10 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a woman was apprehended for stealing various items, and was banned.

On July 9 at 4:18 p.m. near 7200 Hanover Drive, a woman had been staying at a hotel and believed she had booked her room for an additional night. When she returned, her belongings had been removed from the room. She reported that money was stolen from her purse.

On July 10 at 7:30 p.m. near 6205 Springhill Court, a delivered package was stolen.

On July 11 at 1:19 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man was recorded on CCTV footage stealing merchandise.

On July 12 at 4:27 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, three men disconnected a Nintendo Switch from a mounted TV before they ran out of the location.

Vandalism

On July 8 near Springhill Lane and Breezewood Drive, an officer observed gang-related graffiti.

On July 11 near 6000 Greenbelt Road, mall security reported graffiti on the top parking garage of Laugh Out Loud. The graffiti was random and not offensive.

Vehicle Crimes

Stolen Vehicle

Near 9120 Edmonston Court, a man reported his vehicle stolen last Monday; he had thought it had been towed for missed payments.

Recovered Stolen Auto

On July 12 near Cherrywood Lane and Springhill Drive, officers found a Hyundai Elantra with damage to the driver's door handle and steering column; it was recovered before it was reported stolen.

Theft from Auto

On July 9 near 6229 Springhill Court, a registration sticker was stolen (Md. 5EK2162); near 5923 Cherrywood Terrace, a rear tag (Md. 1GL4625); and near 6006 Springhill Drive, front bumper and tag were stolen from a 2008 Silver Honda CR-V.

On July 10 near 9114 Edmonston Court, five cars had airbags stolen: a 2025 Honda CR-V, a 2016 Toyota Tundra, a 2016 CR-V, a 2026 Civic, and a 2022 Civic. Near 5831 Cherrywood Terrace, an airbag was stolen.

All four wheels were stolen on July 10 from a Toyota Corolla near 6113 Breezewood Court; and on July 11 from a 2026 Honda HR-V near 8011 Mandan Road. On July 11 near 7716 Hanover Parkway, lug nuts were stolen from three of a vehicle's wheels.

On July 11 near 120 Westway, a work vehicle had items stolen.

Vandalism to Auto

On July 6 near 6301 Breezewood Drive, a Ford Transit van had a broken window.

On July 7 near 15 Ridge Road, a 2023 Dodge Challenger had a window smashed.

On July 8 near 9111 Springhill Lane, a 2020 Chevrolet had a broken window.

On July 12 near 6000 Springhill Drive, a 2021 Dodge Ram 1500 was broken into through the rear window.

PHOTO BY MARY MURCHISON-EDWORDS

A Clymene moth (also known as a blessing or crucifix moth) visits Schrom Hills Park. It has a very distinct cross marking and according to folklore, if you see one, blessings will come your way.

Porch Pirates Persist with Package Thefts; No Notable Increase

by Anna Bedford-Dillow

In June, Lakeside North resident Kathryn Beard reached out to the News Review to express concern about package thefts. For the first time in almost 20 years living in their Greenbelt apartment, Beard experienced the theft of a delivery. It happened in the early evening, while they were home, and in the space of 20 minutes, they estimate. The rapid theft from their doorstep, while they were home washing dishes, upset them. A couple of months earlier, the rental office had emailed residents to warn about package thefts and to recommend packages be sent to the rental office, but Beard hadn't had any issues until now. Is package theft on the rise in Greenbelt, asked Beard?

Greenbelt Police Department's Public Information Officer Ricardo Dennis reviewed their reports and doesn't believe package theft is rising. Of course, police have to rely on what is reported to them.

Greenbelt police compile all reported residential package thefts in the weekly crime report that is printed in the News Review and appears online at https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/509/Reports. When Dennis reviewed the data for the News Review in June, the last three months (90 days) showed a total of 13 reported package thefts in the city, which does not suggest it is on the rise, he said. However, in the first week of July, some recent thefts from doorsteps in Greenbelt included food orders, too.

Police urge residents to report any incidents of delivery or mail theft to their nonemergency number, 301-474-7200. Sharing information with the police enables them to investigate and track the incidents, and may lead to apprehension of those committing these crimes, Dennis told the News Review. Dennis noted that recently police were able to apprehend a juvenile who was responsible for the thefts of several packages and they located a parent who was going to handle the situation (see the June 11 News Review police blotter.)

Residents experiencing or concerned about package thefts can try a preventative measure such as directing deliveries to their rental office rather than their doorstep. Residents might also be able to share special delivery instructions for where or with whom to leave a package. Some retailers also offer walk-in store pickup or lockers. In addition, signing up for alerts provides updates on when to expect a delivery, through service such as FedEx Delivery Manager, UPS My Choice and USPS Informed Delivery, which offer text, email and mobile app alerts, according to Consumer Reports' recommendations for combatting package thefts. They also recommend requesting a signature and monitoring front porches using a camera or video doorbell, if possible.

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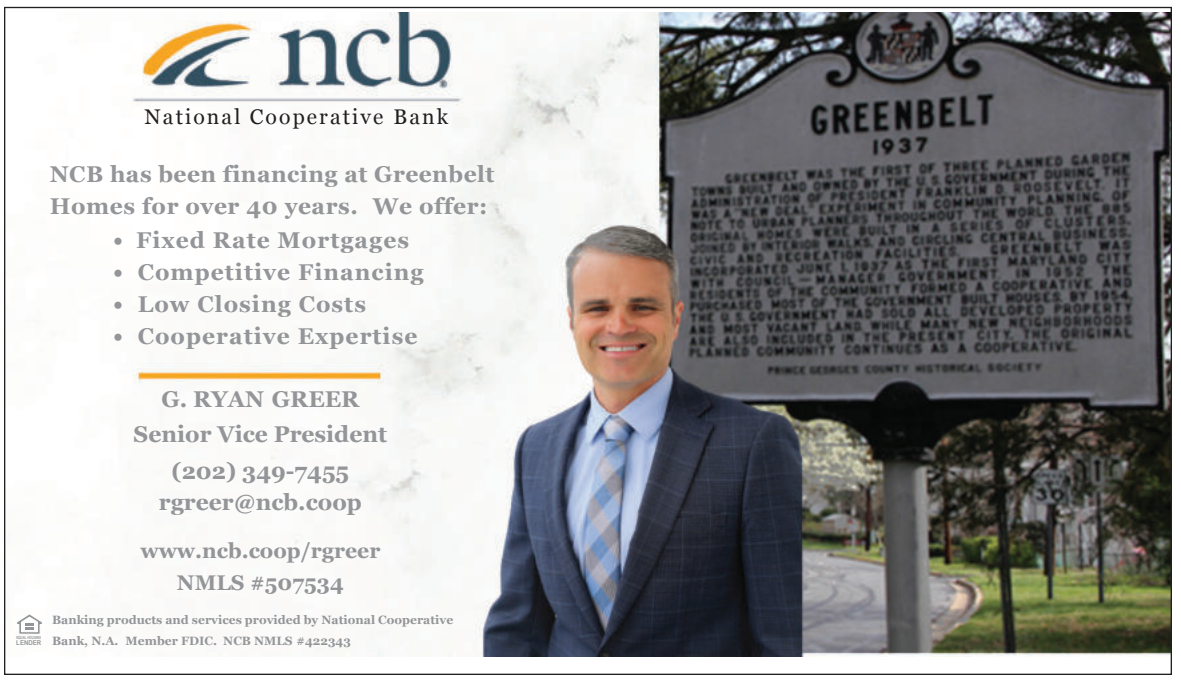

Greenbelters Travel, Summer 2026

PHOTO BY ELIJAH MCEUEN

Kendal Morris and Andrew Durso travel to Kimberley, Western Australia, early in July.

PHOTO COURTESY JIM MIERS

Jim Miers takes a few minutes to catch up on the news on Mt. Floyen, overlooking Bergen, Norway.

PHOTO BY KIND LOCAL STRANGER

Jan Morales, wearing his Greenbelt Co-op T-shirt and holding a copy of the News Review, visits the finish line of the seventh stage of the 2026 Tour de France in Bordeaux, France.

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INVITATION

to all friends of the Association for Public Justice, The AND Campaign, and the American Solidarity Party to come to our house for an unofficial get-together to discover and encourage like-minded Third Way-ers in P.G. County.

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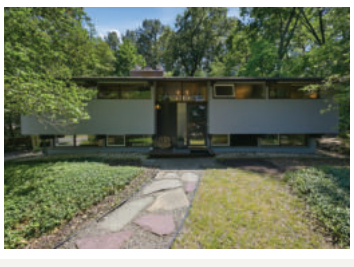

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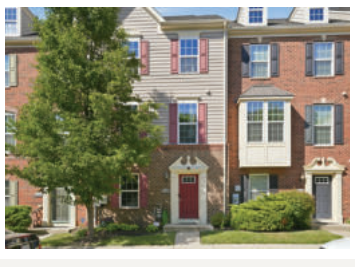

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Emerald City Pride Festival Proves a Success Yet Again

by Christina Whiteman

Greenbelt's fifth annual Pride Festival was held on Saturday, July 11. The event kicked off at 11:30 a.m. with a parade led by Greenbelt HONK! Situation.

Attendees followed the music from Spellman Overpass to Roosevelt Center, allowing the parade to boast its high spirits and bold colors through the city. From the parade's arrival at Roosevelt Center at noon, the Festival transformed the Center into a runway and ballroom. Festivalgoers were invited to enjoy and participate in various themed modeling walk-offs, and later vogueing competitions. The festival also featured local drag artists, art vendors and art-making stations. It closed around 5 p.m.

The festival was directed by Shaymar Higgs, an artist himself and the founder of The SPACE: Free Art For All, an art center in Beltway Plaza. Higgs was selected as Greenbelt's Outstanding Citizen of 2021 in recognition of his contributions to the culture and community of Greenbelt in the form of sharing the power of art with anyone and everyone. "I've always liked creating safe spaces for people to be seen and have a good time," Higgs said. "This is really a magical thing, to be able to let people just be free with all the craziness going on in the world and in people's everyday lives. It's nice to give people a place to be together and share," he added.

The Emerald City Pride Festival, which is the creative offspring of both Higgs and late councilmember Ric Gordon, is yet another example of Higgs' unwavering devotion to this goal. "This is what I see as realizing the Greenbelt motto. There are a lot of cliques in this city, so I see this as a way to knock out some of those barriers." Higgs emphasized his intention through this Festival to encourage people to abandon any imposed expectations and exist freely: "It has just been beautiful to allow people to be free, to have space and get together and not be ashamed – and really show up for each other."

The importance of such a celebration in Greenbelt was evident through the many community members attending, some for the full five-and-a-half hours. "That's another thing that's really magical to me. People have literally stayed here all day to enjoy fun, diversity and love," Higgs said.

Some of those people participated multiple times in consecutive friendly competitions of runway walking and vogueing. Two performers in particular, Z Supreme and J'Adore 007, were actively engaged in the activities for hours on end. At the end of each competitive run – sometimes even up against each other – they smiled and hugged their opponent wholeheartedly. "If it wasn't for the community, I wouldn't be doing this," J'Adore said. Z Supreme elaborated about the significance of community to their own self-expression and art form: "I like that Pride is an important thing to this city. I received the [Pride Month] proclamation about a month ago, and it means a lot to me that they value queerness, especially in these political times, and that people can find a safe haven in Greenbelt."

Although this is only its fifth iteration, the Emerald City Pride Festival is a budding tradition that continues to be meaningful to so many community members both inside and outside of Greenbelt. As Higgs said, "[Pride] is usually just in June, but let's do three months because it's an entire summer!" The enthusiasm shown during the celebration on Saturday proves that the people in Greenbelt and the surrounding community share this sentiment of lasting support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Runway competition at the Pride Festival

A runway hug

J'Adore 007 (left) and Z Supreme participated in the Pride Festival.

- Photos by Christina Whiteman

Summer Fauna in Greenbelt

PHOTO BY MARY MURCHISON-EDWORDS

An eastern black swallowtail butterfly seen at the pond on Hanover Parkway

PHOTO BY SEAN KENDALL

The robber fly, a bumblebee mimic, is one of nature's pest controllers in a GHI backyard near Mowatt Church.

PHOTO BY NICK HALL NH

Damselfly in early morning dew

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